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THE

Commonweal

Revolt of the Children

by Manya Harari

THE WOMAN WHO WAS RICH

by Gunnar D. Kumlien

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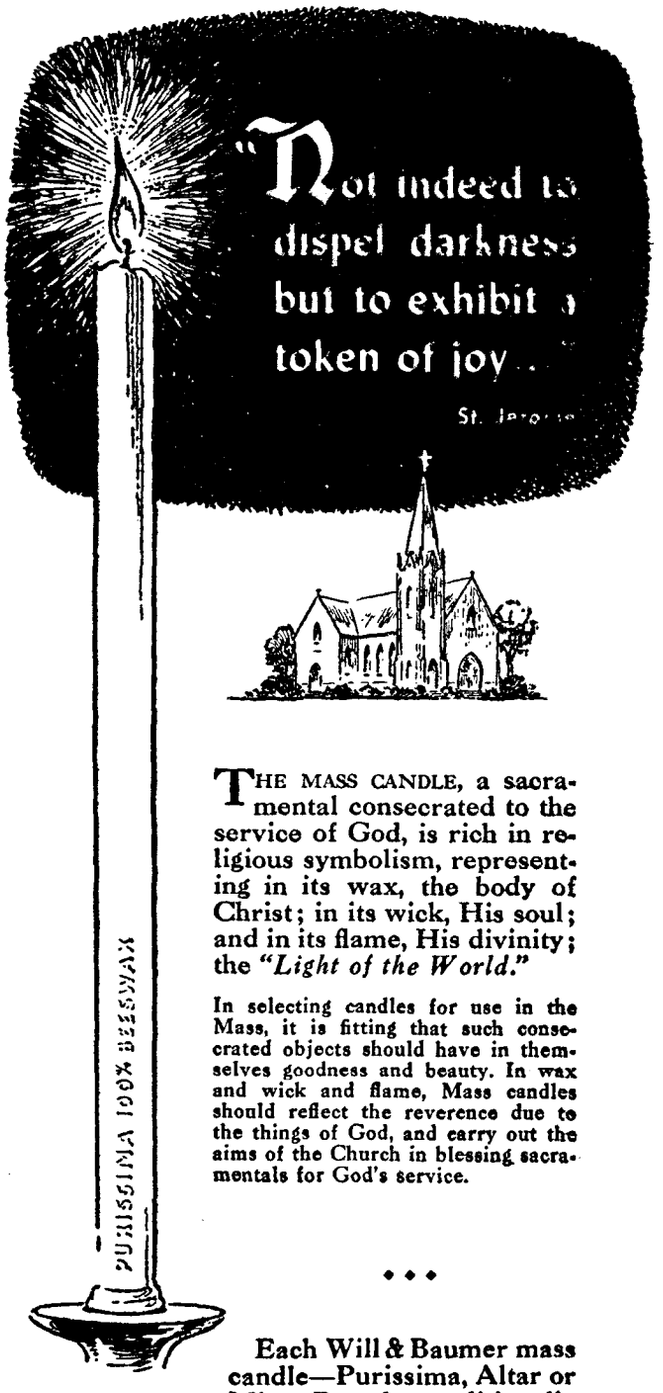

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THE
Commonweal
week by week

THE BOOK-BURNING CONTROVERSY

IN June, 1643, the British Parliament, alarmed that "many . . . false, seditious, and libellous" books had lately been published, to the great defamation of religion and government, ordered that all books must henceforth be licensed and that:

> The Stationers' Company and the officers of the two Houses [of Parliament] are authorized to search for unlicensed Presses, and to break them up; to search for unlicensed Books, etc., and confiscate them; and to apprehend all authors, printers and others concerned in publishing unlicensed books and to bring them before the Houses [of Parliament] or the Committee of Examination for further punishments, such persons not to be released till they have given satisfaction and also sufficient caution not to offend in like sort for the future.

It was in opposition to this order that John Milton wrote the *Areopagitica*: "A Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing, to the Parliament of England."

In July, 1953, three hundred years later, events in these United States are such that a new *Areopagitica,* addressed to the Congress and State Department of the United States, 1953, (with some hope that the President might see it too) is needed. For it seems that battles thought won were not really finished; that enemies thought vanquished were only temporarily retired. In the crisis of our century the foes of a free society have re-emerged; the challenge they offer means that the struggle to maintain such a society must be taken up again—ironically, in the traditional land of freedom itself. Thus does history mock our notions of "progress."

The danger to the liberal society which exists in the United States does not seem to be organized fascism but organized fear. Its enemies are moved not so much by malice as they are by folly. The current controversy over "book-burning," at least, indicates this.

Few people really want to "burn" any books, nor is there, at this time, any serious move toward government licensing of publishing in this country. The book-burning controversy revolves, rather, around a technical point of law—whether or not the United States government should maintain on the library shelves of U. S. Information Centers works which, in the opinion of officials involved, do not further the aim set down for the Centers by act of Congress. This aim is to provide information abroad about the United States and its people, and the policies of the United States government.

UNDER the Truman Administration this intention was broadly interpreted. A wide variety of books, fiction as well as non-fiction, was placed in the overseas libraries. Some of the books were critical of American policies. Some were written by fellow-travelers. Some were even written by Communists. It was hoped that "information" about the variety and freedom of life in the United States would be provided and the propaganda aims of our government would thus be served.

The book-burning controversy is rooted in the Eisenhower Administration's narrower interpretation of the order. Under the relentless prodding of Senator Joseph McCarthy, the State Department has purged books which do not adhere to a rigidly "pro-American" line. Books by Communists, fellow-travelers, "etc.," have been withdrawn. The works of authors cited in testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committees, and of those who have invoked the protection of the Fifth Amendment to avoid answering questions about Communist affiliations or sympathies, have likewise been removed.

The picture has been confused and confusing, with neither the President nor his Secretary of State seemingly willing or able to formulate a clear directive or to make a clear statement of policy. But the general impression has been clear enough, and its effects have been disastrous for American prestige abroad.

The impression is of a country demanding some absolute conformity in the books it is willing to

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circulate; the effect has been to reverse the very purpose of the United States Information program, which was to win friends for the American way of life.

We may now, through our purging of the overseas libraries, have done more to advance the cause of anti-Americanism and neutralism in Europe than the forces of Soviet propaganda and Communist pamphlets in the libraries of the world could ever have done. We have certainly convinced many who were our friends that there is perhaps little to choose between two nations driven by their fear of freedom to the suppression of the critical mind.

Those who have accomplished this defeat—a rabidly nationalist, anti-intellectual bloc in Congress, a vacillating and, to all appearances, incredibly uninformed Executive and badgered State Department—have thought, of course, that in urging or permitting the withdrawal of "un-American" books they were serving the cause of America. It all seems so simple, syllogistically: *The United States Government should not support books or authors critical of its policies. These books and authors are (or have been) critical of its policies. Ergo. . . .* Not to apply the conclusion might seem, in the President's now famous words, "the acme of silliness." And one hears other lines of reasoning which might seem equally compelling—lines about labeling food "poison," so why not books?

The reasoning is specious—tragically so, as our present situation testifies. It ignores the rather pertinent fact of what the United States must remain if it is to survive. And that is a free society which accepts the unorthodox risks which are a free society's necessary accompaniment. It is this free society which has meaning in the struggle between East and West, and it is this, consequently, which should be on exhibit abroad.

Our strength is not in "pro-American" propaganda; it is, rather, in our willingness to tolerate, indeed to welcome, dissent. And this willingness should be marked for export. Our great enemy is fear. That, in the purging of the libraries, we have shown our fear to all the world is our shame and our defeat.

"Who knows not that Truth is strong, next to the Almighty? She needs no policies, nor stratagems, nor licensings to make her victorious; those are the shifts and defenses that error uses against her power," Milton told the Parliament of England.

NEXT WEEK

ROBERT H. BOYLE describes life today in Franco's Spain. He writes:

"As for revolution, it remains virtually impossible, even if the people were so inclined. The support of the army is the prerequisite to successful revolt, and the army is staunchly behind Generalissimo Franco. In addition, both the Basques and Catalans, fierce autonomists fifteen years ago, are uninterested in separation, as Franco has imposed a hitherto unknown stability for their industrial economies. In short, there are complaints, but scarcely anyone wishes to undergo the terrors and miseries of another Civil War. Without intending grim humor, one may say living in Spain is rather like attending one of those stern but inefficient schools where the pupils extract their vengeance by making faces behind the headmaster's back."

EASTERN REVOLT

THE earth has begun to tremble in the Soviet Empire. There are no chasms yet, no collapsed buildings, but the rulers in Moscow feel the tremors, see the chandeliers' imminent swing, and hear the crockery rattle on the shelves.

It is premature to say that the Soviet system of satellites is "crumbling," as some have done. It is impossible to tell how widespread the unrest has been in the past few weeks. There was, of course, the harrowing, magnificent revolt in East Berlin. Other uprisings have been reported in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Rumania. But one big crack and a series of rivulets of shifting earth means only that the human constant is at least asserting itself after almost a decade of oppression. It does not mean success.

This unrest will be met by the Soviets with sterner police measures (and tanks), and with partial concessions. By one method, or both, they will put down the rioters and saboteurs. Men will die for it; but thus men have died for many years and there are worse ways to die. That is a terrible thing to say when one is on the outside, reading the papers, rather than on the inside, stoning tanks. And that is the measure of the problem faced by the West.

We cannot let these uprisings go by with the astonished silence of the days of the Berlin riots. We know now what is happening. We have offered hope to the people of the satellite nations through our broadcasts and propaganda of the last five years, and now must redeem our propaganda.

Armed resistance is impossible. It would have to be backed with troops, and would almost certainly mean war. The classic cement for a cracking empire is war.

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What we are able to do is to increase diplomatic pressure on Moscow to the utmost. We should bid for negotiations, for Russians with internal problems cannot reply very forcibly to serious negotiation from the outside. We should demand an end to terrorism, and a recognition of the demands of the occupied people. We should demand that the world trade unions, the Red Cross, the United Nations specialized agencies be allowed to investigate the complaints of the occupied peoples. The focus of our demands, and the point at which we have some reason to expect concessions, should be Germany. We should offer the East Germans relief shipments of food. We should ask for the reunion of Germany with free elections. We should play back to the world the thundering phrase, "Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains!"

Will we do these things? News from Washington is that a program for Germany is to be prepared for the Foreign Ministers' meeting July 10. That is a slow start, but it is a start. And after the silence of the past weeks, it is welcome.

THE BUSINESSMEN AND THE PRESIDENT

BUSINESSMEN in the United States have tended to be on the defensive ever since the days of the depression. At that time, rightly or wrongly, their prestige went down in direct proportion to the plunge in the stock market and the rise in the unemployment rolls. And for the next twenty years they felt like orphans in Washington, during the regime of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and to a lesser extent in that of Harry S. Truman.

Presumably, all that was changed by the last election. The Eisenhower Administration is generally considered to be a "businessmen's government," and so far no one has complained that industry is not getting a fair shake. At the time President Eisenhower took office, many commentators even expressed the idea that the business community itself was going on trial: success for the Administration would mean a return to the days of respect and careful attention which had once been considered a part of the divine order of things where businessmen were concerned.

In view of all this, the reaction of many businessmen to President Eisenhower's request for a six-months extension of the excess profits tax is surprising. Since the respect given to the business community in the near future hinges to a large extent upon the success or failure of this Administration, one would expect businessmen to rally solidly behind President Eisenhower and his program, for their own sake if for no other reason. Instead, officials of both the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce recently appeared before Congress to testify in opposition to President Eisenhower's request.

The reasoning behind such actions is not easy to follow. More than almost any other segment of the population, businessmen might be expected to fear the unbalanced budget. However much they dislike the present tax, they should be able to appreciate President Eisenhower's motives in asking for an extension of the tax.

As a result, some commentators are already suggesting that there is more to business opposition to the short-term extension of this tax than meets the eye. One such theory has it that the real motive is to force the Eisenhower Administration to introduce in the very near future a national sales tax under some other name, in order to ease the tax burden on corporations and those in the upper-bracket income levels.

If there is any truth in this speculation, we think the businessmen in question are making a serious mistake. The voters may be ready for a return to the leadership of the business community. But it is unlikely that they will consider any version of a sales tax, however disguised, to be a disinterested effort to serve the nation as a whole.

THE CHALLENGE

THE United States has always tired easily of the day-to-day effort necessary to follow a consistent national policy in international affairs. Perhaps one important reason for this is the fact that as nations go this one is still young, without a bipartisan tradition of international diplomacy such as that of Great Britain. But whatever the reason, the fact is there; we do get tired. Although laid to rest time and time again, the specter of U. S. withdrawal from international affairs always rises once more to threaten this nation's position and influence in the world.

Now, apparently, the tired mood is upon us once more. The recent debate in Congress on foreign-aid policy indicated quite well the extent to which we are now tempted to abdicate leadership and responsibilty. Not only long-time isolationists and America-Firsters but consistent supporters of U. S. foreign policy since 1940 expressed their weariness with the whole idea of foreign aid.

President Eisenhower had cut Mr. Truman's foreign-aid request sharply before sending it to Congress. After it got there, various hands took their turns at lopping off a little here and a little

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there. By the time this process was over, the cuts amounted to a substantial sum.

In the course of the debate on the measure, Senator Walter F. George, Democrat of Georgia and an internationalist, announced that he would never again vote funds for the Mutual Security program. Senator Mike Mansfield, Democrat of Montana and a long-time supporter of foreign-aid measures, introduced an amendment to bring the program to an end in 1955. Such sentiments are evidently typical of the feelings of Congress, and very possibly they match the mood of the country.

It may be hard for the harassed legislator or average citizen to see what our tax-money has bought abroad. But the accomplishments won by U. S. efforts and money in Europe since the war have been substantial. Italy and France are still free. Greece is no longer in immediate peril. Yugoslavia continues to pose the threat to Moscow of further defections by satellites. The armies of our allies are taking on shape and substance.

All this has not been easy going, nor has progress always been as fast as the United States would desire. Nevertheless, real gains have been won. And at the heart of the foreign policy which produced this effect has been the U. S. decision to build up the economic strength and military potential of our allies by U. S. aid.

No one wants to see such aid continued a day beyond the time it is needed. But that day has not yet been reached. If aid is to stop, trade with the nations friendly to us must be substantial enough to make aid unnecessary. So far there is little to indicate that this country is ready to lower trade barriers to such an extent that U. S. dollars in aid will not be needed. "Trade, not aid" should be the ultimate goal. No trade and no aid will lead only to disaster.

MUSIC AND LYRICS

NORODOM Sihanouk, King of Cambodia, has among his accomplishments credit for songs in a Broadway musical of a few years back. At that time he looked like a lightweight Bao Dai. He sent an elephant to Harry Truman not long after that, which providentially never reached the White House. That was a bad year for elephants.

This year he turned his eclectic talent to the political relationship of France and Cambodia. He came to the United States and remarked that should Cambodia be invaded by the Communists, he could not promise to rally his people, since they disliked France more than the Communists. Home again, and dissatisfied with the timid French concessions, he got in his Cadillac and drove to "exile" in Thailand. The exile was brief. Back to Cambodia he came to gather his army and issue an ultimatum to France: independence on the order of India and Pakistan, or war.

The French brought in reinforcements at the same time the Laniel cabinet in Paris offered further negotiation to the three Associated States of Indochina.

The split in French opinion was dramatized in Paris by a bitter exchange between Francois Mauriac and Marshal Alphonse Juin. Upon the occasion of his admission to the French Academy, Juin attacked "certain Christian consciences . . . moved by false reports" to support the nationalist movement in Morocco. Mauriac came back with an attack on those who were "'unconscious" aiders of "economic forces which, protected from taxation, hold Morocco in their grasp." Two days later Mauriac was involved in a similar dispute in the Council of the French Legion of Honor. A member of the Legion "questioned" a Communist prisoner in Indochina, and the prisoner died of the questioning. The Legion member was sentenced to five years imprisonment. The Council voted to deprive him of the right to wear his Legion insignia while in jail. Mauriac felt this was a picayune punishment, and resigned.

The debate continues in France, and essentially it is a debate between the pessimism of the truth and the fatal optimism of fiction. Morocco and the Associated States of Indochina are going to be free of France. Large, sincere measures of independence given now will hurt France economically, but stand a chance of winning the native peoples to loyalty to the French Union, and of preserving political stability in the former colonies. A continuation of the present niggardly concessions in Indochina will drive the native peoples to rebellion and possibly to Communism. Norodom Sihanouk is playing on his saxophone the funeral march of traditional French colonial power. It may be his own lament, too; but that is up to France. The world has made a quarter turn since 1900, but certain Frenchmen sat tight.

Certain Frenchmen seem to think that they can maintain their empire while the world burns; that America will finance them in Indochina, and political repression will preserve them in North Africa. If Indochina becomes a three-way civil war, and North Africa a land of terrorism and Communism, they will bear the responsibility. And they may be expected to evade it as swiftly as they have evaded every other momentous responsibility of contemporary France's relations with the peoples of the French Union.

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Revolt of the Children

THEY WERE BORN INTO A WORLD WHERE LIFE ITSELF HAS BEEN DEVALUED.

MANYA HARARI

THE faces, in the photographs in the daily newspapers, of delinquents, and problem children do not always look brutish or savage, but they do look sullen, lonely and proud. It is as if these children had refused or were unable to receive anything starting with life itself.

Perhaps it is a mark of our time that though much is provided, things, including life, are not given or received. Half a century ago the assumption was that life was good and that it was a gift. It was good because being is better than not-being; and it was a gift, ultimately, of God in whose creative power parents shared. They shared in it not just accidentally, but only if they made what Gabriel Marcel calls a *voeu créateur,* a commitment, an assent to life, in gratitude, which itself became the source of a creative relationship between them and their children.

Some such notion still colored family life many decades after Nietzsche had announced the death of God, after Turgenev's Nihilist had proclaimed the revolt of the children and their duty to "deny everything." These ideas were still mainly the concern of some back-room boys. It is only now, when so many explosions have blasted the outward shape of society, that these ideas have infiltrated the household and reached the bedroom and even the nursery.

Today, in the now old-fashioned terms of popular science, popuar psychology, popular sociology, life is not a gift: it is tossed up out of the stream of humanity's biological urge. It is not received; and it is not, by any means, so certain that it is good. For a long time now parents have been asking themselves anxiously: Can it possibly be right to bring children into such a world? Recently Sartre has replied: "Not only in such a world as that of today, but in itself, existence as such, life from its very roots, is absurd, boring, unnecessary, nauseous." Not that many Anglo-Saxon parents read what Sartre writes, but the same idea seems to have occurred to them.

Naturally, when the passing on of life which is at the basis of the child-parent relationship is at a discount, the relationship itself starts at a disadvantage. Yet never has it seemed more important. Devaluation of life, the denial of its givenness, causes a deep feeling of insecurity and dismay—because man needs to live by what is given him, not by what has come to him by chance or by what he has deserved, bought, or won in a competition. Personal relationship must somehow make up for this. If life is not a gift, love is, and the love of lovers and the love of parents must become the source of life. Children always want their parents to represent God (though they would not say so); now the parents must *be* God. The more bitter is their own and their children's disappointment when it is found that they cannot be.

Ours is an exceptionally romantic epoch, in spite of its hard-bitten exterior. Perhaps for the first time in history the marriage of love, at least in the Anglo-Saxon countries, has come to be generally recognized as the only right kind of marriage: married love is identified with romantic love. But what is hoped for from romantic love has almost brought about the breakdown of marriage.

The notion that the human personality finds its perfect realization through romantic love is common to Hollywood and the Troubadours. The difference is that medieval romantic love was subordinated to the love of God. If romantic love set itself out to replace the love of God, it was regarded as a tragic impasse.

Seen in these terms, the post-Christian ideal of romantic love is molded not on earthly marriage but on heavenly union. It must be as spontaneous, as self-generating, and as inexhaustible as grace. It *replaces* grace and it is precisely its gratuitousness, its independ-

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Manya Harari is a British journalist and publisher.

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ence of will, mind, effort, that becomes its test. Marriage after marriage is undertaken and broken off in search of this love, until it begins to seem that love itself is impossible.

In Sartre's film, "Les Jeux Sont Faits," the lovers meet for the first time after their death, in limbo; they are allowed to return to life because the Cosmic Powers have the duty to provide them with the chance of perfect love, but their survival depends on their passing the test of its genuineness. They fail, the woman through her love and pity for her sister, the man through loyalty to his friends. The perfect, all-absorbing, chemically pure love which was the condition of their resurrection is impossible, and so the lovers die, they return to limbo. To live, they required a love which was an absolute, and so their love for each other had to be this absolute, but forced into this role it became impossible. Since it participated in nothing but itself, all other loves and duties were its rivals, and since its test was its freedom it would equally have been destroyed by duty towards itself. What Sartre seems to be saying is that love which is cut off from its metaphysical roots cannot be the ground of being: an existence rooted in such love is rooted in anguish from which it can only seek to escape through its own destruction or through the total absorption and assimilation—the devouring—of the beloved.

BUT what is the alternative? Where is life to find its fulfilment and its roots? Can wisdom be only the cynical and kindly resignation to frustrated appearances?

There is a widespread and healthy repugnance to this view. In the West, and particularly in the Anglo-Saxon countries, this is based not only on dislike, but on the belief, thought to be pragmatic, that without the experience of perfect and successful love neither adults nor their children can be psychologically normal. Individuals who fail to achieve this experience are frustrated as human beings; the frustrated couple turn into the oppressive father and the child-eating mother, and produce the abnormal, unhappy, guilt-laden child: Freud as well as Lawrence, Auden, and the whole literature of child-revolt have told us that. And the more they have shown us the widespread, perhaps the universal, wreckage of children's lives caused by frustration, the more we have become convinced that successful love is possible because it is necessary.

It is true that nobody knows exactly what the normal child is. For some it is the representative of a new race of unparalleled, because never until now undamaged, goodness and greatness. For others it is the savage titan of the Freudian nursery. But what is certain is that normality is a state of happiness and freedom from guilt which belong to undamaged nature —normal love is a state of heavenly union, by-passing the Redemption; normal childhood is the earthly paradise restored through the liquidation of the Fall.

How happy-go-lucky were the sinful parents of sinful children in a redeemed world, compared with the frustrated parents of abnormal children in a world which precedes the exile from Eden! How trustingly they endowed them with life, how confidently they played God to them, making rules, punishing and forgiving, basking in their reassuringly limited responsibility for results—since the child, with its imperfect nature and its free will, would in the end turn out well or badly, however badly or well they themselves did their job.

The order they established was taken for granted by them, and, if they were lucky, by their children, as a part of the cosmic order. And if the children were lucky they derived a measure of security and of freedom both from the impersonal quality of the order and from the personal quality of sin and forgiveness. The rules and regulations were there to relieve them of the harrowing responsibility of unlimited choice. They conformed; or they transgressed the outward rules as one does at school, in a neutral zone unfanned by the heat of personal relationships. But if they sinned on the deeper levels of conduct, they sinned personally and against a person, God, Who had the miraculous power of forgiveness. This power was exercised by His representatives, the parents.

But only the forgiven child can forgive. The properly forgiven child has at no point abdicated his responsibility. He is forgiven for a deliberate misuse of his free will, and the forgiveness frees him from the damage caused by that misuse. His freedom is miraculously renewed and restored to him. Because his sin was his own, he has no need to hate others, and because it is forgiven he has no need to hate himself; he can use his undamaged powers to forgive others in turn.

WHAT has happened to the compact self-assurance of the Victorian household? We know that the children in it were not always lucky, that the order was often unjust and oppressive, and that consciousness of sin was used as a means of tyranny. But then the parents repented. At about the time of the decline of imperialism, excessive paternalism in the family too fell into disrepute. The father abdicated; as the principle of authority he has since been liquidated so thoroughly that he has almost ceased to exist. For the parents' crisis of conscience carried them to a progressive and increasingly appalled and paralyzing realization of the full extent of their guilt.

There were many reasons for this. At that time the idealized image of the victim, innocent and oppressed—innocent *because* oppressed—hovered over Europe, in the East and in the West. Berdyaev has

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shown the part which it played in preparing the revolution in Russia. Kirsanov, the father in Turgenev's *Father and Children,* was as stricken, as guilt-laden, as were, in a succeeding generation in the West, the remorseful heirs of Victorian paternalism. Only Kirsanov's guilt was towards his peasants; what he felt before his son was shame and an obscure hope. Later this repentence was amplified by the Tolstoyan realization that the rich men's guilt was not confined to outward tyranny but was woven into the very texture of their lives.

In the individualistic West it was the child who was identified as the victim. After the age of reason when children were despised, and the Victorian era of will when they were regimented and ignored, there came the discovery of the unconscious and the powerful, unintentional alliance between Freud and the Romantic movement. Children came into their own. But it was soon seen that it was not enough to liberate them from conscious tyranny. The removal of the oppressive father left behind the more sinister figure of the child-eating mother. Mrs. Morel, the mother in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers,* looked down at her child:

> She had dreaded this baby like a catastrophe because of her feeling for her husband. And now her heart was heavy because of this child, almost as if it were unhealthy or malformed. It seemed quite well. But she noted the peculiar knitting of its brows, as if it were trying to understand something that was pain. And in the moment she felt in some far inner place of her soul that she and her husband were guilty.

Because Mrs. Morel felt guilty, she enslaved her children much more thoroughly with her overcompensating love than had ever been done by the Barretts of Wimpole Street with their stern authoritarianism. She could never set them free, any more than she could free herself, until at last they, out of their love for her, came to her relief with an overdose of morphine.

Fortunately for herself, Mrs. Morel knew what she was doing only at rare intervals; it is after she became a famous figure that the parents could no longer close their eyes. For the normal child—wholly free from mental suffering and from feelings of guilt—was nowhere to be found, and the damage was now seen to be much deeper.

The child was damaged, malformed, in infancy, or at birth, or before its birth, and the parents alone were responsible for its abnormality. They were answerable to it with the whole of their being: not just for some failure of justice or kindness, but for the guilt of frustration woven into their whole lives; the child was the mutilated fruit of their own self-mutilation; and now their repentance, with its over-eager love, could do nothing but complete the work of distruction. Horrified, they withdrew. The greater the child's weakness and need for guidance and affection, the less safe it was for them to approach it. Never had the notion that the sins of the parents are visited on the children been apprehended with feelings of more guilt and fear.

Logically, neither parents nor children should feel guilty, since the failure of the parents is only that of their own parents and so on *ad infinitum.* But in practice this is harder to deal with than original sin. The damage seems more final, and there is no God to redeem it. In practice the experience is that of guilt; and the suffering that goes with this is itself felt to be guilty, since it is another sign of the failure to achieve normality. And as all this is illusion, as there is no actual guilt but only feelings of guilt which are neurotic, there can be no forgiveness.

In a world in which sin exists, forgiveness implies a deep connection between human beings—a creative power to set one another free. But the belief in psychological determinism is the coffin of such relationships. The child believed to be damaged and believing itself damaged can neither be forgiven nor forgive. Its damaged being is a crying accusation, but it has nothing and no one to accuse except life itself, which alone is the cause of the original damage.

Even the traditional outlet of rebellion is denied to the child. The parents are cowering out of its reach; besides, such as they are, they are the only windbreak against the loneliness, boredom, and insecurity of the life they have unwisely unleashed on it.

That there is a widespread awareness of some such problems as these is shown by the many remedies which are suggested and which include the return to paternalism and the return to faith. But paternalism without faith is even less likely to succeed than it did in the past. And no one can have faith for the sake of the children or of moral values, or for any reason other than that he believes that what he believes is true. Besides, faith is not a snap solution for the problems of any age. It is only the assertion of a mystery at the roots of being, an affirmation of a different level of thinking and living from the one on which problems are met and examined. And perhaps it is a descent to that level and in the contemplation of its mystery that a way can be sought to a greater reverence for life and towards the recovery of creative freedom.

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FROM ITALY

The Woman Who Was Rich

Trieste

SHE undoubtedly was an extreme case. Perhaps that is why she was so interesting as a person. She had a way of seeing and judging herself, unusual in a woman, as if her own tragic life did not concern her. And there is no doubt that her life had been a tragic one.

She had a wooden leg, which was what had made me notice her. She was living in one of the camps where refugees from Yugoslavia (and beyond) are cared for by the Allied military authorities in Trieste. She belonged to the White Russian group, still on the move since the October Revolution thirty-five years ago—the last ghostlike wave of them expelled from Yugoslavia by Tito as suspected Moscow sympathizers.

She belonged to the "hard core," hopeless cases, who for one reason or another are practically ineligible for final resettlement in the West. She was too old to be accepted anywhere, for only young, select, DP's are welcome in the Free World. She simply was human wreckage thrown up on a foreign shore, too tired to wish anything more from the future.

But she had a keen memory and tried to understand. She could recall every detail of her early life as the wife of a wealthy businessman in Kiev. A member of the minor nobility, she had been one of the first women in Russia to take a university degree. She was the only child of a well-to-do father, and had been spoiled as was possible only to children of the wealthiest classes in Russia at the beginning of the century.

"Wealth is attracted to wealth," she said with detachment, as though she were thinking aloud. "And misery," she went on, "is like a contagious disease which spreads and forms big incurable patches."

Two handsome, intelligent children had been hers, a boy and a girl, and servants: nurse, cook, maid and coachman. Her story sounded almost like a social satire by Gogol: her social life had been terribly intense, with much ceremony and many problems of fashion and society. A society life, she said, as in Italy today. She had attached enormous importance to dresses, jewels and furs, and judging from the bleached and worn photographs she had with her, she must have been very beautiful. She had wished to be envied.

All at once, unexpected and merciless disaster had overcome her. At first she could not believe that it could reach her safe, protected existence. Then her husband was killed fighting with the White General Deniken, and for her nothing was left other than flight to the West with the children. She was unable to take with her more than a few jewels. During the journey through the chaotic Balkans they were the victims of a railroad accident. Her daughter was killed, and she was injured so badly that her leg had to be amputated. While in the hospital in Belgrade, her little son caught typhoid fever and died, and her last money was just enough to pay for the doctors and the funeral.

THAT is how the second part of her life began. Only then did she come to a true perspective on her past life. She has kept that perspective through hunger, loneliness and endless humiliation, eking out a living as a seamstress. Now she had reached the terminal station here among the hopeless cases in the Trieste camp. It had been given her to experience the two extremes, almost like Job, and now she was dispassionately observing herself, with a couple of other refugees, and myself, a stranger, gathered for tea around an old and battered brass samovar.

The strange thing about this woman, as I have said, was that she was able to see herself in her present distress from the viewpoint of the past, and yet could judge the past in terms of the hard new life. She could objectively weigh her own subjective perceptions of joy or suffering almost as if they were the perceptions of others. She was by no means insensible or cold; on the contrary she was obviously able to feel joy and suffering intensely. But the happy mechanism with which most people are gifted, to remember more easily the joys of life than the sorrows, was not hers.

She still could recall the pangs felt by the luxury-spoiled wife when she suffered the slightest social "defeat." Even now these tragedies did not seem futile, so deeply had she known them.

She said that recently she had been standing among the curious at the entrance to one of the big Trieste hotels, watching guests arrive for a formal dinner. There were representatives of Italy's egotistic high society, and American officers and their wives. She had overheard bits of conversation, and read the faces, and felt something of the atmosphere which once was her own. She heard hard, hateful remarks in the crowd around her: Why should they have everything and we have nothing? Why should they roll in luxury while we lead a life unfit for humans? She had surprised herself with her answer: Believe me, they are no happier than we are. The people around her did not appreciate that remark, and she might have been in for trouble had she not been an old woman with a wooden leg.

She was so convinced of the relativity of all our

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feelings, that she did not hesitate to compare her earlier social tragedies with her later sufferings. She remembered that as a rich wife she had played with the horrifying thought that she might lose that which she loved more than anything else on earth, her husband and children. She had played with the thought in curiosity, and had then been convinced that if any of these disasters should strike her, she would commit suicide out of despair or would die of heartbreak.

Now, she had not only been struck by these disasters, but more. And she had not committed suicide, nor died of heartbreak, but simply had gone on living.

THE story of Job interested her so much. He was patient in spite of all his sufferings, not only for religious motives, but—as she put it—because the subjective perception of suffering tends to be constant. One gets used to everything.

Some of us, who listened to her, couldn't help thinking that this was all rather paradoxical. She willingly explained what she meant, as she was the incontrovertible authority on the question: People who get used to the most wonderful things, she said, particularly if they get used to them from birth, don't appreciate those things, and suffer deeply and sincerely from trifles. Thus the sufferings of the rich and officially happy, which objectively are petty, are nonetheless, subjectively speaking, real agony. On the other hand, people who from birth know the most inhuman sufferings become dull and hardened so that their individual, subjective perception of pain is less. It is of course quite different from an objective point of view—she stressed that particularly—and the sufferings of the officially happy are completely unintelligible to the proletarian. But the subjective perception is what matters, where suffering is concerned.

It has been said, she went on in her strange detached way, that suffering purifies and ennobles, whereas wealth and success makes man vain and superficial. It is true, but only to a certain point. Beyond that point man is hardened and inured and dull, out of habit. The sufferings, real but not understood, of the rich and successful prevent them from becoming too vain and superficial. Nature seems to care that we all have our cross to carry.

It is something of a fashion nowadays to deal with the poorest, she went on: the Americans do it with their relief groups, and the Communists do it with their propaganda. There are people on both sides who are sincere and feel sympathetic, and indignant. They eagerly study the problem, be it the problem of the Italian worker or the Egyptian fellah or the Indian pariah, but the objects of their care often are strangely uninterested. They are hardened.

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN.

THE LABOR MOVEMENT

The Hearn's Strike

ON June 15 the U. S. Supreme Court, by a four to three vote, saved Harry Bridges, West Coast longshore leader, from a five-year prison term and restored his U. S. citizenship on a technicality. Four days later Jack Hall, head of the Bridges union in Hawaii, was convicted of conspiracy to "teach and advocate violent overthrow of the government."

They have been after Bridges for years. Indictments, convictions, appeals, reversals have followed each other with monotonous irregularity. This is the first knockdown for Hall. But I doubt if anything the government can do to him—up to and including life imprisonment—will have any effect whatever on the continuing fact of Communist domination of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, formerly CIO, now independent. Unless it prolongs it.

American workers have shaken themselves out from under Communist control in only three ways that I know of. Either the rank-and-file voted them out, as in the case of the Newspaper Guild in 1941. Or the Communists (or fellow travelers) got converted and then cleaned out the party-liners who refused to be converted, as in the case of Joe Curran and the National Maritime Union or Mike Quill and the Transport Workers. Or the workers seceded and joined or formed another union, as in the case of the anti-Communist fraction which left the United Electrical Radio & Machine Workers, formerly CIO, now independent.

The Distributive Processing and Office Workers Union was a case of conversion. When the Communist unions (there were about ten of them) were thrown out of the CIO in 1949, three of them banded together and formed this thing called the DPOW. It combined farmhands with soup canning workers with shopgirls with insurance salesmen with anybody else who wasn't tied down. Its main strength was in New York City among department store and warehouse employees. Total membership was about sixty thousand.

The most able leader in this group was Arthur Osman, who became president. Osman and some of his lieutenants grew restive under the Stalinist yoke. As early as 1951 they showed unmistakable signs of thinking for themselves. They declined to go along with a pronunciamento calling for Negro self-determination on a national "Black Belt" basis. Communist

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spokesmen then rebuked them as "white chauvinists."

They eased out of office in the DPOW more devoted comrades such as Jim Durkin, formerly president of the office workers, and a man named Henderson (his first name escapes me) who was head of the old Communist Food Tobacco and Agricultural Workers.

They did worse things. They refused to tie the DPOW to the tail feathers of the Communist "peace dove." They declined to support the American Labor Party candidates in New York elections, and for their sins they were denounced in *Political Affairs,* the pro-Moscow monthly, and in the *Daily Worker* for "giving aid and comfort to the Wall Street imperialists," for something called "economism" (bread-and-butter unionism) and something else called simply "backwardness."

Seeing these things, the late Allen Haywood, executive vice-president of the CIO, pricked up his ears and dispatched emissaries to talk to Osman and friends.

As a result of these talks Osman and the DPOW was given a CIO charter a few weeks ago and so returned to the house whence they went out in 1949. It was also announced that they would probably merge with the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, CIO, in the fall. And so another sixty thousand workers were lost to the Communist Party.

ABOUT this time, however, the prodigals ran into trouble from another quarter. They ran head on into a man named Albert Greenfield.

Greenfield bought Hearn's two department stores in Manhattan and the Bronx about four years ago. The stores were not doing very well and Greenfield began to cut down on his sales force. He laid off twelve hundred employees, reducing the staff from two thousand to eight hundred.

Affiliates of the DPOW had represented the workers in these stores since 1937. Faced with the possibility that Hearn's might have to close down completely, the union cooperated with Greenfield and agreed to the lay-offs provided that they were on the basis of seniority, as specified by the contract.

Six months ago Greenfield informed the union that business was still lousy and that he was going to convert his stores to self-service, on the super-market principle, and get rid of even more of the help.

Negotiations were started for a new agreement to succeed the one that expired February 28. Osman and the DPOW negotiators did not oppose the additional lay-offs, but they balked at Greenfield's demand that he be allowed to lay off without regard to length of service. They also balked at his demand to lower the minimum wage from thirty-eight dollars to thirty and to cut his contribution to the health and welfare fund in half. But the big issue was seniority in the lay-offs, or rather the continuation of seniority in lay-offs. And while they were sitting around talking about it, Greenfield continued to lay off union workers in violation of seniority.

At this point Osman and friends made a slight miscalculation. They underestimated Greenfield. They figured that all Greenfield needed was a little shaking up, "a little bouncing around," as they say in the labor movement. So they pulled a sitdown strike, right out of the old Communist textbook. The union organizers were all over the store, whipping the employees into line and yelling at the customers. It was the old razzle-dazzle, and not very polite either. Greenfield responded by firing all eight hundred of his employees.

(When I say, "right out of the old Communist textbook," I don't mean that nobody but a Party-member ever went in for sitdown strikes. But the comrades were better at it than anybody else and they clung to the technique long after others gave it up as too messy altogether.)

The next day Judge Ernest Hammer temporarily enjoined the union from "demonstrating inside the stores" and also enjoined Hearn's from firing its employees.

Greenfield took them back, all except two shop stewards. At this point the union could have gone back to Judge Hammer and said, "What about it? Is this a violation of the injunction or isn't it?" But instead of that I guess they said to themselves, "To hell with this. We'll give Greenfield a real strike and see how he likes it."

So on May 14 all eight hundred employees, all that remained of the original two thousand, walked out in an orthodox work stoppage and they are still out. And it looks as though they are going to be out for a while yet unless Mr. Greenfield changes his present tune.

That tune is contained in large ads which have been running in the New York papers under such headings as "All New York Supports Hearn Department Stores" (*N. Y. Times* June 5, 1953). Which seems to be a slight overstatement, to put it mildly.

The *Times* ad of June 5th is mostly a blow-by-blow recapitulation of the Party-line records of such DPOW leaders as Osman, David Livingston, William Michelson, Carl Andren, and Jack Paley. All of which is doubtless true. And it charges that the DPOW is still "a Red union" and "Communist-inspired." Which is certainly not true if we mean by such epithets that the DPOW is still under control of the Communist Party.

SCRIPTURE reminds us that the sins of the fathers are sometimes visited upon the children. Arthur Osman and his DPOW colleagues are now suffering for the sins of their Stalinist period. But I don't think this justifies the tactics of Albert Greenfield. The latest

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of these is an attempt to take advantage of one of the perfidious clauses of the Taft-Hartley Act, which provides that strikers cannot vote in a representation election if their jobs have been filled by strikebreakers. Greenfield is now filling them, drawing on Negroes and other job-hungry sections of the population, and the AFL Retail Clerks has happily cooperated with the scheme by filing a petition for an election.

I doubt if Mr. Greenfield is going to settle this thing with any such maneuver. Or keep his store afloat if he does. Not on 14th Street, one block from Union Square, or on 149th Street in the Bronx either.

The real issue is lay-offs according to seniority. When Mr. Greenfield says in his ad, "Hearn's wants to establish self-service in order to provide the public with the greatest savings" and then adds, "These union leaders forbid it," he is stating a more serious untruth than his attempt to tie them to the Comintern.

No one denies that Mr. Greenfield has a problem. So does Mr. Osman. No union leader as smart as Osman deliberately puts a store out of business and his own members out of work.

Believe me, Mr. Greenfield, the members and leaders of the DPOW *have* freed themselves from the Communist yoke. It is up to you to help free them from the yoke of unemployment and a growing bitterness which could even lead them back toward the Communist Party.

This thing could be settled with a little cool reasoning, and a half pinch of that spirit which was expressed by Rabbi Abraham Cronbach, amid cries of "No, no!", at the funeral of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg: "Our hardest task is to eschew hatred, to forsake rancor and to keep our hearts clean of vindictiveness and retaliation."

JOHN C. CORT.

THE SCREEN

AND MADE OF GREEN CHEESE

IT is unfortunate that "The Moon Is Blue" is the film that is to test the power of moviedom's self-imposed Production Code. The picture's producers (Otto Preminger, who also directed, and F. Hugh Herbert, who also wrote the script from his stage play) are releasing "The Moon Is Blue" through United Artists in spite of the fact that Eric Johnston, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, refused it a code seal of approval. In the past this would have meant that the large theater chains owned by studios who were members of the MPAA would have been bound not to show the film; but now that the theater business is separated by law from the production-distribution side of the movies, many theaters are no longer tied with the Johnston Office; and they can and will do as they please.

Without doubt, the Production Code, with its many rules of do's and don'ts, has fenced in the movies so that they have not attained their rightful stature; and no doubt the Code, which was drawn up in the early thirties when the motion picture industry decided they preferred self-regulation to censorship by a wide variety of governmental and other organizations, needs revision. But I'm sorry to see the issue brought to a head by an inferior film like "The Moon Is Blue." Audiences who have been clamoring for adult films (and have been blaming the Production Code, when most of the blame should go to the studios who insist on making movies for the twelve-year-old mind) won't find what they have been looking for in F. Hugh Herbert's shallow comedy.

It's about a young girl who is picked up by a New York architect who takes her, without too much coaxing, to his apartment. She disarms him with a brand of frankness which he confusedly admits is either incredibly naive or meant to rib the pants off him. Most of the dialogue is a tease carefully calculated by scriptwriter Herbert to shock the audience through the use of words unusual to movies. Nobody goes to bed with anybody. After the girl sends the architect for groceries, she is visited by the man upstairs, a middle-aged roué who is so delighted with her youthful charm and provocative *non-sequiturs* that he proposes marriage.

Except for the architect's getting an old-fashioned black eye from the girl's old-fashioned father, nothing much happens in "The Moon Is Blue." But there's an awful lot of talk about sex. At first it seems amusing (or at least startling) and then it becomes tiring as an over-ripe cliché, and then offensive as an endless and pointless off-color story. The heroine talks so much about being a virgin that you come to agree with the character who calls her a "professional virgin," and with the architect who says "People who advertise are anxious to sell something."

Although Preminger's direction is static, the film does have a couple of good performances. Newcomer Maggie McNamara is very cute in the lead role; and William Holden is properly boyish and baffled as the architect. David Niven leers all over the place as the wolf upstairs. But for all its good cast and fancy setting, "The Moon" adds nothing to the art of cinema and it certainly does not deserve the attention it will get for flouting the Production Code. If it is a box-office success (and well may be as a result of all the controversy), it may even defeat the very purpose for which the MPAA was organized: local boards of censorship will spring up like toadstools to plague the already overburdened movie industry.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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COMMUNICATIONS

"CLERICALISM, ANTI-CLERICALISM"

St. Paul, Minn.

TO the Editors: In his bill of complaint [June 5, 1953] against "certain erroneous presuppositions" in my article, "Clericalism, Anti-Clericalism," I am afraid that Father Donnelly did me an injustice by inferring some things which I most certainly did not imply: when I assigned jurisdiction of the State over matters natural and temporal, and jurisdiction of the Church over matters supernatural and supra-temporal, I thereby neither stated nor implied that the spiritual is not natural to man. Nor did I set up an opposition between "spiritual" on the one hand, and "earthly and temporal" on the other, as he infers. When Father Donnelly says that "the State is natural to man, but its limits are the terrestrial not the whole natural order" he most certainly finds no opponent in me; in fact, it was to preserve this very truth that I added "temporal" to "natural" in describing the proper competence of the State. Neither is there any point of difference between us regarding the "mixed" nature of marriage which is the joint concern of both Church and State.

However, regarding the matter of the application of the moral law to individual, concrete moral acts, Father Donnelly and I are not in entire agreement. He says: "It is entirely false to conclude that the *ultimate* decision as to the application of moral law or canon law rests with the individual and his conscience. The authority to teach divine law includes the right to apply it authoritatively to the individual person." If Father Donnelly's last phrase is to be taken literally it is somewhat meaningless: the law is not applied to the person, but rather to his *acts*, since law, according to Saint Thomas, is the "rule and measure of human *acts*." (It is reward or punishment that the judge applies to the *person*.) Now the human acts in question are those of the individual person; he performed the act, he alone knows the extent of his knowledge of the relation of that act to the law, he alone knows the extent to which his own will caused that act, he alone knows all the subjective circumstances of that act. Consequently, he alone can apply the law to his individual act; this is, as I understand it, the precise point where the individual conscience properly operates. The ultimate decision about a penitent's guilt cannot be determined by the confessor, for the latter can pass judgment only on the objective morality of the act confessed—that is the extent to which that *kind* of act is either in conformity or in non-conformity with the law. The other two factors which formally determine the sinfulness of an act, due knowledge and full consent, can, by their very nature, be known only by the penitent. In fact, his very presence in the confessional is the penitent's own admission of guilt. In the confessional, the penitent is both prosecutor and witness. He goes to the confessor not primarily to have the moral law applied to his acts, he goes, rather, to obtain forgiveness for the acts to which he has himself already applied the moral law.

I should like to emphasize again that in stating that the individual *applies* the law to his own acts, I was quite careful to make certain fundamental distinctions: *application* of the law should never be confused a) with private *interpretation* of the law itself (which would in effect destroy the objectivity of the law), nor b) with *dispensation* from the law. Both interpretation of the moral law and dispensation from the positive Church law properly belong to the duly constituted Church authorities. It is in excercising these two functions that the Church preserves her character as the true teacher and the divinely appointed legislator. If this is what Father Donnelly means when he says, "The authority to teach divine law includes the right to apply it to the individual person," then we are in solid agreement.

I am sure that Father Donnelly rejoices with me that this little public exchange between us is concrete evidence for those individuals who may pause to observe that there is a legitimate area of debate between fellow-Catholics even in matters theological; that there is little substance to widely heard charges about the monolithic authoritarianism which some profess to find as the essential mark of the Church.

FREDERICK E. FLYNN.

"CATHOLICISM IN AMERICA"

South Bristol, Maine

TO the Editors: The recent articles by Reinhold Niebuhr and Will Herberg [May 8 and May 22] raise a point which has interested me for some time: the relationship between Christianity and tragedy. Dr. Niebuhr does not in fact bring it up in his piece, but it is a deep-seated concern of his, and underlies, I believe, most of his thinking; Mr. Herberg does bring it up, in "a characteristically 'Jewish' way," and says that it embodies his basic criticism of American Catholicism.

Catholics "do not take sin and the human predicament resulting from sin seriously enough and therefore tend to overlook the profound ambiguity of all our thinking and doing." There is "too little readiness to break bounds and venture forth" in "the true 'prophetic' spirit;" we ignore Dr. Niebuhr's maxim about fighting "the falsehood in our own truth." American Catholics "show too little sense of standing under the continuing judgment of God, which shatters all our pretensions and calls into question all our easy certain-

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ties and assurances." There is consequent optimism, cheeriness, and "spiritual geniality."

I have taught a course in tragedy for several years, and it is on these very points that I have found some grounds for distinguishing between tragedy and Christianity. Profound ambiguity in the presence of evil; human life as a predicament; standing under judgment; assurances called into question—these things generate the tragic frame of mind, the tragic sense of life. For the religious person, the Problem of Evil—which is the root of tragedy—becomes the conviction of sin; the tension, the qualm, the psychomachia, the *agonizing* result of the "dream of innocence confronted by the fact of guilt." Thus tragedy can get a start in a religious vision of human life, and of the cosmos, which is "Jewish" or Manichaean or Calvinist. But Christians (let me here say Catholics) believe in the efficacy of the Incarnation and the Redemption: that the hegemony of the devil was destroyed once and for all. The Gordian knot has been cut; death can have no victory; the gates of heaven have been reopened; the gates of hell shall not prevail. Sin remains (although the *devastating* effect of Original Sin has been removed), and each man must work out his salvation with diligence, if not in fear and trembling; but his life is no longer, in the proper sense, a predicament or a dilemma. *Tuis enim fidelibus, Domine, vita mutatur, non tollitur. . . .*

Gnomic phrases out of context might perhaps telescope and oversimplify the ethos of tragedy, but these three may serve to document the distinction I am trying to make: a Greek chorus said, "From the clearest gods, grace comes somehow violent;" the religiously noncommittal Shakespeare had his pagan Lear ask, "Is there a cause in nature that makes these hard hearts?" But Dante dismissed the dilemma by a simple affirmative equation: "His will is our peace." Two great un-Catholic tragedies, framing the great Catholic comedy.

At the root of the question of living in a vale of tears, then, there is a basic incompatibility between the tragic and the Christian view. (Aeschylus was a tragic theologian, and so, I think, is Dr. Niebuhr.) I have little quarrel with Mr. Herberg's findings on the *results,* in American Catholicism, stemming from this fundamental Christian optimism; indeed, his strictures on the practical secularism, the banalities, timidities, and mediocrities of everyday life strike me as regrettably just. But despite his disclaimer at the end, the impression I get from his article is that Catholics *ought* to be less spiritually joyful than they are—that they aren't tragic enough. He earlier ascribes the Catholic's optimism to "his enthusiasm for the natural powers of man"—both he and Dr. Niebuhr stress as characteristically Catholic a "Natural Law" mentality —and this may be the chief source of misconception. For in whatever theological, philosophical, cultural, or pragmatic terms Catholic optimism expresses itself, it is grounded in enthusiasm not for the natural powers of man but for the supernatural fact of redemption.

LAURENCE MICHEL.

"AN AMERICAN IN ASIA"

Toronto

TO the Editors: I was surprised to read the letter in the Commonweal of June 19, written by Mr. Richard L-G. Deverall. He misrepresented Mahatma Gandhi's views on the caste system. Caste system is not an integral part of the Hindu *religion,* but a *social* custom devised by people long ago to have a better order of "division of labor" for the growth of a society and civilization.

As a matter of fact, it was at the instance of Mahatma Gandhi that the Indian National Congress decided, a few years back, to abolish the caste system, which in the present form is a great drawback to the growth of modern society. . . .

According to Hindu society the Untouchables *do* belong to the Hindu community and they are the lowest class of the caste system. Gandhi helped them, *not* to bring them into the caste system, but to strike at the root of the caste system.

Today every social worker in India, rightist or leftist in political opinion, is against the caste system.

Mr. Chester Bowles, whom we Indians consider to be one of those Americans who tried his best to depict a true picture of India, was right in stating that "the caste system is officially unconstitutional."

SAMIR K. DAS GUPTA.

"THE FINALY CASE"

Saint Albans, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I think it would be misleading to let pass, without comment, the remark in Robert Sterling's letter [June 26] that "it is difficult for a non-Catholic to appreciate that the Church, which indubitably finds its central authority at Rome for its faithful adherents, could not act forcefully to remedy a great injustice, such as [the Finaly Case]."

This assumes a dictatorial power in the Papacy and a degree of centralization that would make the Church truly totalitarian. In France, Baron Rothschild made much the same comment as Mr. Sterling.

It is fascinating to find that those who do not accept papal authority in its proper exercise are anxious to invoke it for a quick solution of problems that disturb them. This is like asking for miracles.

(*Rev.*) VINCENT A. BROWN.

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The Cosmic Struggle

FOR THE SAKE OF HEAVEN. By Martin Buber. Translated by Ludwig Lewisohn. Harpers. $3.

By WILL HERBERG

HASIDISM emerged in Eastern Europe in the eighteenth century against the background of a "time of troubles" for Jewry—the confusion, turmoil, and bitter disillusionment that came with the collapse of the pseudo-messianic movement of Sabbatai Zevi. It emerged in rebellion against the externality, over-intellectualism, and legalism that characterized much of the conventional rabbinic Judaism of the day and it tried to effect a renewal of Jewish spirituality through an internalization of piety and the building of a "holy community" of disciples (*hasidim*) gathered around a charismatic leader, the *zaddik*.

Such hasidic communities sprang up over most of Eastern Europe wherever Jews were to be found, and in certain regions (Poland, Ukaine, Galicia) grew to be very influential, if not dominant. Dynasties and schools arose as leadership became hereditary and difference of doctrine and tradition more clearly defined. Some of the *zaddikim,* indeed, became almost fabulous figures and acquired vast reputations and followings.

Hasidic doctrine is very hard to define, but it would seem that there were a number of strains in it, by no means clearly distinguished: a pietistic mysticism, with certain gnostic overtones; an existential emphasis, sometimes startling in its anticipations of much of contemporary religious thinking; and a recessive though not insignificant millennarianism. These were fused into a religious ethos which emphasized spontaneity and joy and which frequently passed beyond what conventional rabbinism regarded as the limits of decorum.

A good part of Martin Buber's earlier literary work was devoted to making the treasures of hasidic spirituality better known to the Western world. In conformity with a characteristic hasidic mode of communication, these writings have been largely in the form of the retelling of anecdotes, for it is precisely the "sacred anecdote," as Buber points out, the "blending of an event with a saying," which best "expresses the hasidic intention" aiming "at the oneness of outer and inner experience, of life and teaching."

In *For the Sake of Heaven,* however, Buber attempts a more epic-episodic approach. Basing himself on extant traditions, he tells his gripping tale of how certain *zaddikim* a century and a half ago strove mightily through the theurgic arts of the "active Kabbalah" to convert the Napoleonic wars into the "wars of Gog and Magog" and thus to hasten the coming of the Messiah, and how others resisted their efforts on the ground that redemption was not to be furthered by trying to force the hand of God but rather by repentance and heroic works of obedience in redeeming the time. Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchak, the "Seer," of Lublin was the mighty charismatic leader of those who were determined to "hasten the end" by their kabbalistic arts, while the "Holy Yehudi," of Pshysha, and his devoted friend, Rabbi Bunam, held to the other side.

Each had his ardent disciples and followers scattered through the hasidic world, and the struggle between them takes on all the aspects of a vast and far-reaching cosmic conflict in which Napoleon, the Czar, and Great Britain are dwarfed into merely secondary figures, almost puppets in the hands of the wonder-working rabbis. The story is told in episodic form, but it loses none of its tenseness for all that.

Buber tells us that the theme took strongest hold of him during the concluding years of the first world war, but he could not write the story until much later. "What finally brought the book to maturity," he says, "was once again an objective factor, namely the beginning of World War II, the atmosphere of telluric crisis, the dreadful weighing of opposing forces, and the signs of false messianism on both sides."

A book that saw its beginning in one world conflict, was written under the impact of another, and deals with a great spiritual struggle to realize the meaning of still another, a century and a half earlier, is surely a book that speaks to the condition of our time. Ludwig Lewisohn's translation is excellent.

A Novelist Revisited

EDITH WHARTON. By Blake Nevius. University of California. $3.75.

By ADRIENNE FOULKE

EDITH Wharton's reputation has suffered more in the last two decades than that of any other twentieth century American novelist (with the possible exception of Cabell). With this acknowledgement, Blake Nevius sets about in this study of her fiction to analyze why and to what extent such unsympathetic neglect is unmerited. He concludes that in spite of her limitations in subject, scene and insight, Mrs. Wharton belongs in the mainstream of American fiction and although today she is meagerly reprinted only in student anthologies, he finds that she has a scattered but steady following.

In one sense, Mrs. Wharton contributed to her own decline by producing toward the end of her life a number of distinctly second-rate novels (Mr. Nevius nervously blinks at the possibility that she may have helped to found the radio soap opera school), and a few of her best-known books, such as *Ethan Frome,* give a limited view of her achievement. Then, unquestionably, she was swept under by the flood of social realism of the thirties, i. e., fell victim to a fashion which has itself been superseded. Mr. Nevius enumerates other sins with which she has been charged: "too well-bred, too narrow in her social out-

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look, too chillingly rational in her treatment of experience to be able to convince us always of the genuineness of her sympathies or to maintain a real hold on the affections of the reading public . . . she resisted almost every tendency of postwar American culture, in manners, morals and art."

These are plausible and probable but still partial explanations: taken singly or together, they do not seem to yield a full accounting of her fall from favor. It is true, as Mr. Nevius remarks, that with us the charge of snobbery almost suffices to prevent sympathetic discussion of a writer.

Has she valid claim to our attention today? Mr. Nevius believes so and presents her case persuasively. As a chronicler of her class and period, Mrs. Wharton was able, as no other novelist of her generation, "to illuminate a major aspect of our social history through the dramatic conflict between the ideals of the old mercantile and the new industrial societies." Secondly, next to Henry James, she has been our most successful novelist of manners. And finally, "she overcomes what has seemed to many critics to be the narrowing influence of her subject matter by her exploitation of two great and interlocking themes. The first is provided by the spectacle of a large and generous nature . . . trapped by circumstances ironically of its own devising into consanguinity with a meaner nature. . . . She then tries to define the nature and limits of individual responsibility, to determine what allowance of freedom or rebellion can be made for her trapped protagonist without at the same time threatening the structure of society."

In his analysis Mr. Nevius is, of course, restricted to Edith Wharton's published works, including her autobiographical *A Backward Glance* (1934) and Percy Lubbeck's *Portrait of Edith Wharton*, which appeared in 1947, both remarkable for their reticence, together with the meager critical comment available. Until such time as the Wharton papers, now in the custody of the Yale Library, become available in 1969, this study can serve as an excellent interim critique. Mr. Nevius is sympathetic without making exaggerated claims and scrupulous in pointing out what must for the moment be speculation rather than more solidly based evaluation.

Whether or not Mrs. Wharton will ever enjoy the revival Henry James has had is questionable. The loss which her disappearance would mean is obliquely suggested by her own question: "What has become in America," she once asked, "of the copse, the spinney, the hedgerow, the dale, the vale, the weald? We have reduced all timber to 'woods.' "

The Price of Reticence

BEYOND THIS PLACE. By A. J. Cronin. Little, Brown. $3.75.

By JEAN HOLZHAUER

WAS it our own youth and first enchantment with reading grownup novels that made Dr. Cronin's earlier books, *Hatter's Castle,* for instance, and *The Citadel,* seem so vigorous, so various and penetrating? Or—an equal possibility—have the twenty-five years of his prolific authorship caused these sometimes evanescent qualities to vanish into the air?

Whichever the explanation, his latest novel is a rather flat and mechanical tale, and as Louise Burt, one of its characters, would say, seems "too long by 'alf."

When Paul Mathry discovers, at twenty-one, that his father is a jailbird instead of the honorable and defunct commercial traveler that Paul has been taught to believe him, he should have been grateful to his mother for concealing the information and at great personal sacrifice "bringing him up decent." Instead, to his surprise, he finds himself sympathizing with his father. *Beyond This Place* describes his practical expression of his sympathy and his incidental problems, which include falling in and out of love and contracting pleurisy and empyema.

The plot turns largely upon the inability of the characters to tell each other the things that ought to be told. Paul's mother cannot speak of her husband's incarceration. The prosecuting attorney does not discuss his manipulation of the evidence. Paul's sweetheart cannot relieve his mind by stating that her illegitimate child was the result of rape rather than consent.

This general reticence ought to evolve as a good suspense story, but the outcome is predictable, and the atmosphere oppressive with contrived mystification. When the convict father emerges to call his wife and his pastor "mealy-mouthed hypocrites," the reader is beyond caring whether the charge is justified, so grateful is he for the oasis of spontaneous frankness.

Dr. Cronin is as good as we all remember him at local color. There are believable scenes in barrooms, court rooms, department stores, public libraries and breadlines. The details he uses are precise.

Such touches of authenticity, however, are somewhat lost in the elaborate forest of stereotype. It is not precisely that the characters are "all good" or "all bad" as that the intermediates are so neatly and truly intermediate according to pattern. They offer few surprises; they are more like people in popular novels than people in life. The story is complicated rather than complex, episodic rather than integrated; it is held together by a "story-line," the continuous pursuit, by the central character, of a course of action, rather than by a real theme which permeates the whole.

This lamentably pedestrian quality is reinforced by the quality of the prose, which is strung on a thread of cliché. The Chief Constable's face is "carved in granite;" Castles' features are "composed to mask-like blankness;" Paul is "spurred to fresh hope," and so on. Right, abetted by a pair of crusading newspapermen, triumphs, and the ex-convict agrees to take up chicken farming. It is enough to make one confuse Dr. Cronin with Lloyd C. Douglas; an incipient confusion which we record with real regret.

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Medieval Musician

JOHANNES OCKEGHEM. By Ernst Krenek. Sheed & Ward. $2.

By FRANCIS J. BURKLEY

JOHANNES Ockeghem has always been one of the most enigmatic figures in the musical life of the later middle ages. Even in his own time (circa 1430-1495) he seems not to have been adequately understood, at least for those special qualities which the twentieth century finds arresting and which the perspective of history clearly claims for him; yet even today he remains a personality with whom not even the most ardent concertgoer is required to reckon: partly because of the centuries-long inaccessibilty of his works, partly because of their rather baffling complexity which renders authentic performance a distinct challenge, and also because our own Chopin-Tschaikowsky-Brahms-drenched ears find the medieval musical idioms almost more difficult to comprehend than contemporary atonality.

Few authorities are as well qualified as Ernst Krenek to bring Ockeghem once more before the wide public which he so eminently deserves. Mr. Krenek goes a long way in a very short space (eighty-four brief pages) towards quickening this shadowy and majestic immortal for the modern reader, and paving the way towards engaging the interest of the modern conductor, performer and listener. As Mendelssohn revived Bach for the Victorian consciousness, Krenek (with of course the patient research of musicologists to light the way) reminds his own era of a composer with whom, at its best, it has much in common.

This first in a series of *Great Religious Composers* (di Lasso and Gulliame De Machaut are promised next, with others to be announced), edited by John J. Becker, addresses itself specifically to "the general public as well as those persons responsible for church music." Hence neither the historian of music nor the musicologist need expect to find more here than the lightest adumbration of technical and paleological

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Brother August Raymond Ogden, of the Brothers of the Christian Schools studied at The Catholic University of America, in the Department of Political Science, where he produced *"The Dies Committee"* originally as his doctoral dissertation.

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—*Chapter XVII,* THE DIES COMMITTEE

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problems or controversies. The non-professional, however, should be delighted with the author's happy way of bridging the centuries with the apt, if occasionally almost flippant, phrase. The author presupposes that the reader is innocent of the ability to translate musical notation into a satisfactory visual pattern, much less the faculty of inner "hearing," hence there are none of the examples which usually illustrate a delineation of this type.

One might nevertheless question whether the layman, even if he does know how to find middle C on the piano, will get much out of explanations like the following: "This procedure makes the B, which lies halfway between G and D, a sort of pivot around which the harmonic processes revolve. Now the B [can be corrected] by either lowering the B-natural to B-flat, or, more rarely, by raising the F to F Sharp."

A few basic technical points are necessary to the subject matter, however; and for the most part Mr. Krenek, himself one of the most brilliant of the moderns, puts over this minimum with exactitude, humor, and pungent readibility. The opening section, "Hidden Treasures," should be required reading in all seminaries, chanceries and choir-lofts, but the interest of these pages, as well as of the remainder of the book, is both broad enough and balanced enough to merit a large and grateful reading public.

Two Looks at the World

FOREIGN POLICY WITHOUT FEAR. Vera Micheles Dean. McGraw-Hill. $3.75.

THE CHALLENGE TO AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY. John J. McCloy. Harvard. $2.

By M. A. FITZSIMONS

THESE two books were written in the belief that the time had come for a reassessment of American foreign policy; and the spectacular changes of this year have already slightly dated both books.

Mrs. Dean, convinced that "domestic and foreign policies are but two faces of the same coin," concludes that the difficulties of our foreign policy arise not from foreign conditions but from our own divided soul. If American foreign policy is to be successful, the dynamic and democratic forces in the United States must triumph over those static and conservative forces which at home perpetuate racial divisions, and abroad put forward an intolerant capitalist ideology.

In spite of the brave title of her book, Mrs. Dean is best at describing our limitations and the misgivings of our critics. Those familiar with her study, *The United States and Russia,* will not be surprised that the present work is unsatisfactory in its account of Soviet policies. Indeed, and this is surprising, *Foreign Policy Without Fear* discusses our international policies without presenting a systematic analysis of the major problems we face.

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Of course, there are many useful and penetrating observations. Possibly the most noteworthy is the recognition that we are not at all prepared for a discussion and settlement of the principal Far Eastern problems—at any rate, on terms other than those dictated by military victory. But I cannot agree with her insistence that our economic assistance to underdeveloped countries must be given solely on their own terms. The experience with the Iranian Seven Year Plan goes against her point and should have been treated. Nor can I agree with her rationalist optimism that anti-American prejudice may be removed, by information services where it is due to ignorance, and in all other respects by sympathetic understanding of foreign criticism. Has Mrs. Dean ever dealt at length with the impermeable disciples of *The New Statesman and Nation* or with the willful ingenuities of neutralist intellectuals?

Finally, *Foreign Policy Without Fear* is not very readable. And it is questionable whether it is necessary to mention that we do not live in an ideal world, but Mrs. Dean repeats this and similarly pointless statements with the effect of detracting from a book which, if not illuminating, might have been provocative.

The second book is terse and sharp. John J. McCloy writes from his experiences as Assistant Secretary of War (1941-1949) and High Commissioner for Germany. Against the Soviet threat, which he sees largely in terms of a continuing expansion, he looks to the fostering of the community of the free world, a concept undefined unless it means the non-Soviet world. There is, however, one tantalizing reference to the possibility of Soviet recognition of realities, but this remains undeveloped. The fostering of the community of the free world, he notes, puts terrible burdens on our diplomats, for our foreign policy today must be concerned with people and movements as well as with governments.

He believes that our military men are well-trained, even in political matters, but that our government in the last twelve years has too often emphasized military rather than political considerations, as for example, in our approach to Japan in early 1945. To emphasize the primacy of the political, he urges that the Joint Chiefs of Staff should normally report to the President through the Defense Secretary, and that the Joint Chiefs should be made more independent of their respective services. In addition, he rightly argues that in each country abroad our chief representative should have over-all authority over the whole range of our activities in that country, and that once policy is determined, our diplomatic representatives should not be restricted to cabled instructions but should have freedom and flexibility.

McCloy's brief book is, within its limits, valuable and readable. But it calls for one dissent. Mr. McCloy says that our diplomatic representatives do not necessarily need a knowledge of the languages of the country in which they serve. This is an unworthy concession to American provincialism and laziness.

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Into the Dark

PATROL. By Fred Majdalany. Houghton Mifflin, $2; Ballantyne, $.35.

By GEORGE MILES

THIS is a short, swift war story with a realistic tone. It becomes evident early that Mr. Majdalany has experienced the kind of life which he describes accurately and convincingly. His scenes and his characters are completely authentic although the people are generally overshadowed by the situation.

The chief character, Major Tim Sheldon, is company commander of a British infantry unit in North Africa. Leader of an outfit which is severely under strength and weary, he is, himself, fatigued from combat and wounds suffered in previous battles. Nevertheless, he assigns himself to a dangerous night patrol which is ordered unexpectedly by division headquarters. The specific mission, to determine whether enemy troops still hold a white farmhouse, is suggested flippantly to the commandering general by an impatient and irresponsible intelligence officer who is more concerned about getting wine for the officers' mess than about patrols.

The action is simple. Mr. Majdalany with strong images, especially tactual and kinesthetic ones, follows Sheldon on his reconnaissance and then on the patrol. Reflections by Sheldon permit the reader to learn of previous incidents while the action progesses.

After completing the patrol, Sheldon is wounded, and, although he reaches the company area in apparent good shape, he dies later in the ambulance as a result of shock and fatigue. A newspaper communique next day says "Nothing to report. Patrol activity."

Mr. Majdalany has written a good novel and has made his point. Most men who "went on patrol" feared and hated the job and the persons responsible for ordering the patrols. Fear of patrols stemmed mainly from fear of the disabling power of darkness, a feeling which Majdalany knows well and which he conveys in a remarkable way. The real, great despair which unknown position in the dark prompts has not, as far as I know, been recreated so accurately and convincingly in any other novel.

Other notable sections of the book deal with fraudulant military figures in high ranks and low, in combat areas (Division Forward was usually ten miles back of the fighting) and rest centers, who did business as usual; the relation between field marching and music; the psychology of the wounded. There is a splendid picture of a general officer called Scratcher who, like many other publicity-thirsty actors, exaggerated a pose or a gesture which had won them a nickname, a brief but excellent treatment of convalescence which reveals how soldiers descend from the level of "poor wounded" to "wounded" to "spender."

Except for one or two moments of overdramatic language and an occasional unconnected episode of amour this is a solid and a successful story. It achieves what it set out to achieve.

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Editor

WHERE MAIN STREET MEETS THE RIVER. By Hodding Carter. Rinehart. $4.

By WILLIAM PFAFF

HODDING Carter bought a broken press in April, 1932, had it welded together, and with a bank balance of two hundred and ninety-two dollars, set himself up as editor and publisher of the Hammond, Louisiana, *Daily Courier*. Four years later, he and his wife sold the *Courier* (to Huey Long then, with a most satisfying last word), and went to Greenville, Mississippi and the *Delta Democrat-Times*. In Mississippi, Will Percy, a frail man who fought the "rabbit people" in his homeland for a lifetime, got together the support which put the *Democrat-Times* on the streets, and gave Carter the medium which made him nationally known as a critic of, and spokesman for, the New South.

In Louisiana, Carter had sometimes done his newspaper editing with a .38 in his belt. In Mississippi, life was less dangerous, but had its times of violence. There was Bilbo, there were racial explosions, civic crusades, and most recently, some genteel raids on the industry of New England. Carter roared through it all with fine humor and the talent of one of American journalism's great editorialists. He capped his professional career with a Pulitzer Prize in 1946.

He held his place with the *Democrat-Times*, taking excursions as a Nieman Fellow, as a writer for *PM* (where the conflict between liberalism and the liberal dogma drove him away) and as a soldier, first with the National Guard, Mississippi's Dixie Darlin's, and then with Army journalism.

He writes of it all in this book pleasantly and positively, with good sense and a philosophy which might uncharitably be called enlightened Rotarianism. But it is better understood as the way of men who are sensitive to the lives of individuals, to decency in cities, to the vitality of America which springs not from rationalizations in capitals but from the uncertain, untold lives of citizens such as those of Greenville, Mississippi.

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Will Herberg, author of *Judaism and Modern Man*, contributes to *Commentary*, The Commonweal, and other publications.

Adrienne Foulke is a free-lance critic who lives in New York.

Jean Holzhauer reviews regularly for this magazine.

Father Francis J. Burkley is a priest of the New Orleans archdiocese.

M. A. Fitzsimons is an editor of *The Review of Politics* at Notre Dame.

George Miles contributes frequently to The Commonweal.

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He Fought Three Days and Nights

Lieutenant Colonel
Raymond G. Davis, USMC
Medal of Honor

COLD, BATTLE-WEARY, fighting for every mile of wintry road, the Marines were re-deploying toward Hungnam. A rifle company was guarding a mountain pass vital to the withdrawal of two regiments. The company became surrounded. If help didn't come, 6,000 men were lost.

Into this situation, Lieutenant Colonel Davis boldly led his Marine battalion. Over eight miles of heavily defended icy trail they attacked, and across three ridges deep in snow.

They fought three days and nights, often hand-to-hand.

But finally Colonel Davis reached and freed the company. He opened the pass and held it till the two regiments got by. Then, fighting through the last of the enemy and carrying his wounded with him, he led his own gallant battalion into safety.

"Korea and World War II have taught me," says Colonel Davis, "that courage is common to *all* armies; it's the *better equipped* side that has the edge. You're giving *our* men that edge every time you invest in a United States Defense Bond. For Bonds, which are personal savings for you, are also muscle for America's economy. Helping produce *more* and *better* combat equipment to protect the brave men who are protecting us all."

Peace is for the strong!
For peace *and prosperity* save with
U. S. Defense Bonds!

Now E Bonds pay 3%! Now, improved Series E Bonds start paying interest after 6 months. And average 3% interest, compounded semiannually when held to maturity! Also, all *maturing* E Bonds automatically *go on* earning—at the new rate—for 10 *more* years. Today, start investing in Series E Defense Bonds through the Payroll Savings Plan at work. Remember, 8 million fellow Americans find it a wonderfully easy way to save. Or ask your banker about the convenient Bond-A-Month Plan.

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